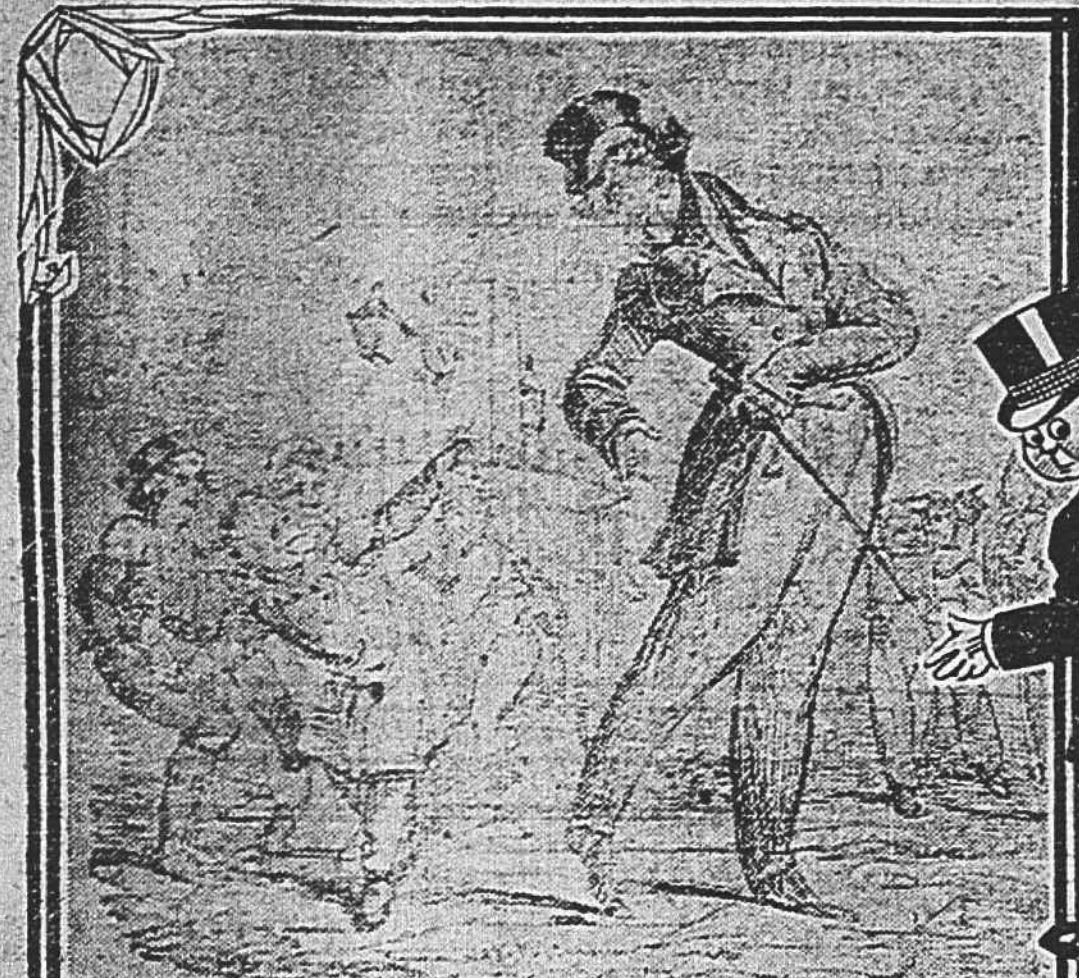


# SPECIAL FEATURE PAGE

## All Fool's Day - A Relic of Ancient Rome



"Whistle on your coat, mister?" Why the Tail of Course April Fool (From a Rare Old Print)

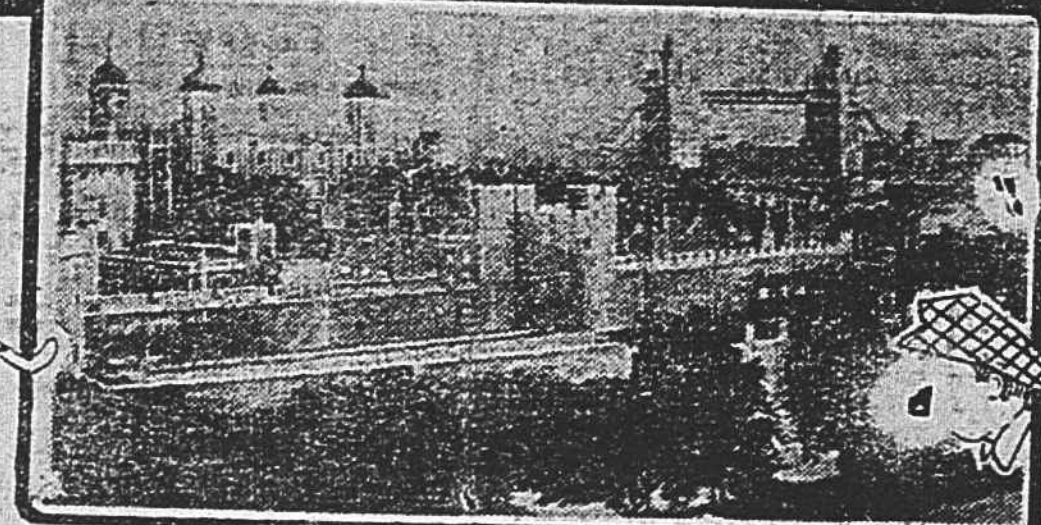
Legends of the Origin of "April Fool" and Some of the Queer Pranks Which Have Been Played On That Day In Various Parts of the World.

No sooner doth St. All Fools' morn approach But Wagges, ere Phebus mount his gilded coach, In sholes assemble to employ their sense In sending fools to get intelligence: One seeks hens' teeth in farthest part of the town, Another pigeons' milk; a third a gown From strolling cobbler's stall, left there by chance. Thus lead the giddy tribe a merry dance And to reward them for their harmless toil The cobbler 'moun'ts their limbs with stirrup oil. Thus by contrivers inadvertent jest One fool exposed makes pastime for the rest. —Poor Robin's Almanac, 1728.

AFTER vainly trying to find an origin for the silly custom of "fooling" people on April first the majority of historians have come to the conclusion that it is a relic of the old Roman Saturnalia. It was at that time that Calus

Old Drawing Showing the pranks of the "Feast of Fools," Rome

and Manlius bent their classic wits to the task of fooling one another during that part of the ceremony known as "the feast of fools." A small number of antiquarians, however, still cling to other ideas of its origin and these are repeated here for what they are worth. Some believe that All Fools' Day originated with what was known as the "Feast of Hull" celebrated in India. This occurred on March thirty-first, when the chief diversion of the people was to send their friends on foolish errands, such as sending them letters to meet a certain person at a certain point and then hiding somewhere until they appeared and having a laugh at their expense. Still others contend that the day began with the mistake of sending the dove out of the Ark before the waters had abated on the first day of the month among the Hebrews, which answers to our first of April, and to perpetuate the memory of this deliverance it was thought proper that whoever forgot so remarkable a circumstance should be punished by being sent upon an errand similar to that infelicitous message upon which the bird was sent by the Patriarch. A few cling to the old legend that it originated in the time of Christ, that the Passion of our Saviour took place about this time of the year, and the Jews sent Christ backward and forward to mock and torment him—



The Tower of London where the Great April Fool Joke was Played in 1860



Carrying Each Other through the Streets, Feast of Fools

from Annas to Calaphas, from Calaphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, and from Herod back again to Pilate, thus attributing this ridiculous or rather impious custom to a sacred subject. To further substantiate their claim they give the French name for April fool "poisson d'avril" on the theory that "poisson" is the corruption of "passion." Such an explanation is as unpleasant as it is untrue, for the term "Poissons d'Avril" means exactly what it says—"April fish"—a young fish, therefore easily caught, as in English when we use the word "sucker"—a small fish. Another origin for the custom is traced to France. This nation took the lead over all Christendom in commemorating the new year on January first instead of March twenty-fifth. Before the change was made the merry-making culminated with a feast held on April first, when visits were paid and gifts bestowed. With the adoption of the reformed calendar in 1564 New Year's Day was carried back to January first and only pretended gifts and mock ceremonial visits were paid on April first with the view of making fools of those who had forgotten to change the date. The custom once started was kept up even long after its origin had been forgotten. Feast of Fools. But after all, these origins must

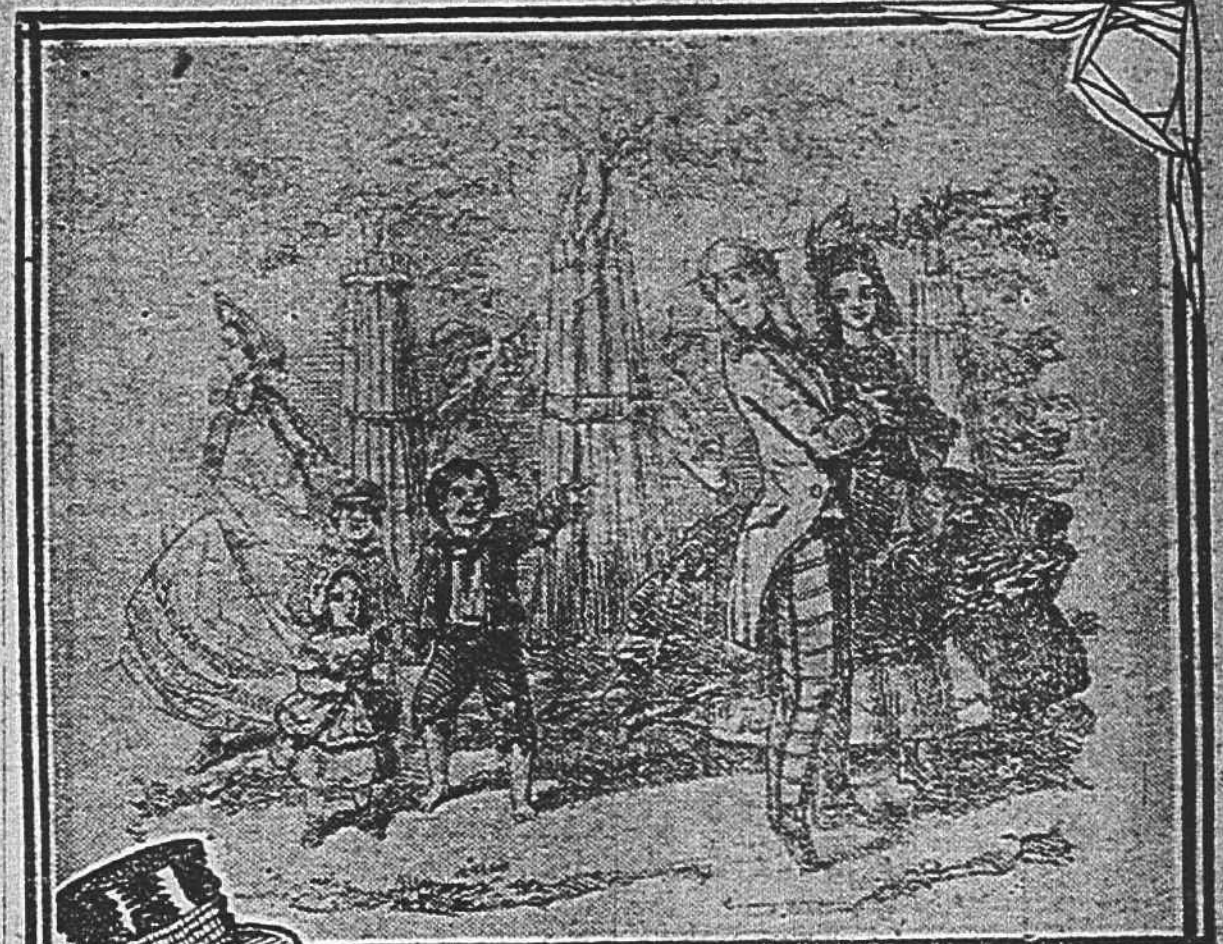
give way to ancient Rome, for the feasting of fools even though it occurred on February seventeenth is the nearest thing to our All Fools' Day. Although this feast took place in pagan times it was really one of a series of burlesque festivals which are said to have been introduced into the Christian Church by Theophylact, Patriarch of Constantinople, and was a recrudescence of the Roman Festa. In France and Italy a bishop and archbishop of fools were elected and confirmed with a lot of buffoonery, after which a pope of fools was chosen. All sorts of riotous and impious scenes took place, such as eating sausages on the altar and burning old shoes in the censers. The people performed all sorts of pranks on the streets, being carried about on each others' shoulders for the amusement of the crowd. The Churches depending immediately upon the Holy See refused to permit these things and apply the custom died out and the simple fooling of people took its place and is still universal throughout the world. All Fools' Day in Eighteenth Century. There is little record of All Fools' Day pranks in England until the early part of the eighteenth century. About this time Addison makes reference to it, telling how "a neighbor of mine, who is a haberdasher by trade and a very shallow, conceited

fellow, makes his boast that for these ten years consecutively he has made not less than a hundred fools. My landlady had a falling out with him about a fortnight ago for sending every one of her children upon a 'sleeveless' errand, as she terms it. Her eldest son went to buy a half-penny's worth of inkle at a shoe-maker, the eldest daughter was dispatched half a mile to see a monster; in short, the whole family of innocent children were made April fools. Nay, the landlady herself did not escape him."

Dean Swift, in his "Journal to Stella" in 1713, tells how he spent a lively evening in "contriving an April fool." The scheme was to circulate a report through their servants that a man who had been hanged a few days previous had come back to life and could be seen in flesh as a guest of the Black Swan in Holborn. He was anticipating great sport at seeing the crowd on the following day, but after all, he records later, somebody told the people that the whole affair was a joke and he himself became the April fool. On April first, 1810, Napoleon married Marie Louise, Archduchess of Austria, on which occasion the wags called him "un poisson d'avril"—a young fish—an April fool. As a memorial of his marriage Napoleon had a number of medals made which showed Love tearing a thunderbolt. Later these medals were known as April Fool Medals and several of them are to be seen in the French Museum.

Royalty indulged in the Sport. At one time even royalty indulged in the sport of April fooling. Peter the Great in 1719 set about to fool his people by building an immense pile of wood in the open square in front of the palace at Petrograd. This was covered with tar and other inflammable material. On the morning of April first he had it set on fire. The flames shot high in the air and the people came into the city by the thousands to assist in putting out the fire which they believed was consuming the palace. When they reached the square they were met by soldiers who shouted—"Sheepheads, pigs, swine, donkeys! Fall back by order of the Czar! Can't you understand that the Little Father has fooled you?" It is the first of April.

Tower of London Joke. Another historic bit of fooling was when Francis, Duke of Lorraine, and his duchess escaped from prison on April first in the fifteenth century. They came out of prison disguised as peasants and were recognized by an old woman attendant. She called to the soldier who was on guard, telling him that it was the duke and duchess. "April fool!" was the sentry's answer, and the royal couple went out undisturbed. When the guard went off duty he told the story to his friends and they called it a smart trick. The Governor enjoyed the joke as well.



"Hey Mister, Whistle on your Face! Your Nose, April Fool" (From a Rare Old Print)

and even while he was laughing word came to him that the peasants were none other than the royal prisoners and they were now beyond his reach. In 1860 all London was aroused over a clever April fool trick which was perpetrated on some of the best families. On March thirty-first a large number of persons received post cards conveying the following invitation:

"TOWER OF LONDON Admit bearer and friends to view the annual ceremony of washing the white lions on Sunday, April 1st, 1860. It is particularly requested that no gratuities be given to the wardens or their assistants. Entrance at the White Gate."

In one corner of the card was a seal which proved to be the die of an inverted sixpence put on to give the invitation an official appearance. The result of the hoax was greater perhaps than the perpetrator imagined it would be, for it is said that hundreds of people went to the tower in response to the invitation and all day long cabs rattled about the walls, the drivers inquiring for the White Gate. "Hunt the Gowk."

In Scotland, the proverbial land of wit and humor, the curious practice of "hunting the gowk" was in vogue for many years. Gowk, originally a cuckoo, means by extension a fool, a simpleton. The trick as played was for a wags number one to send his victim, was number two, for some distance with a letter containing words such as these: "This is the first of April—Hunt the gowk another mile!" After reading it number two hands it to number three and so the letter passed on until somebody discovered the joke. In writing of this a Scotch poet seems to think that the man who did the sending was the bigger fool of the two, and says in rhyme—"It is a thing to be disputed. Which is the greatest fool reputed—The man who innocently went

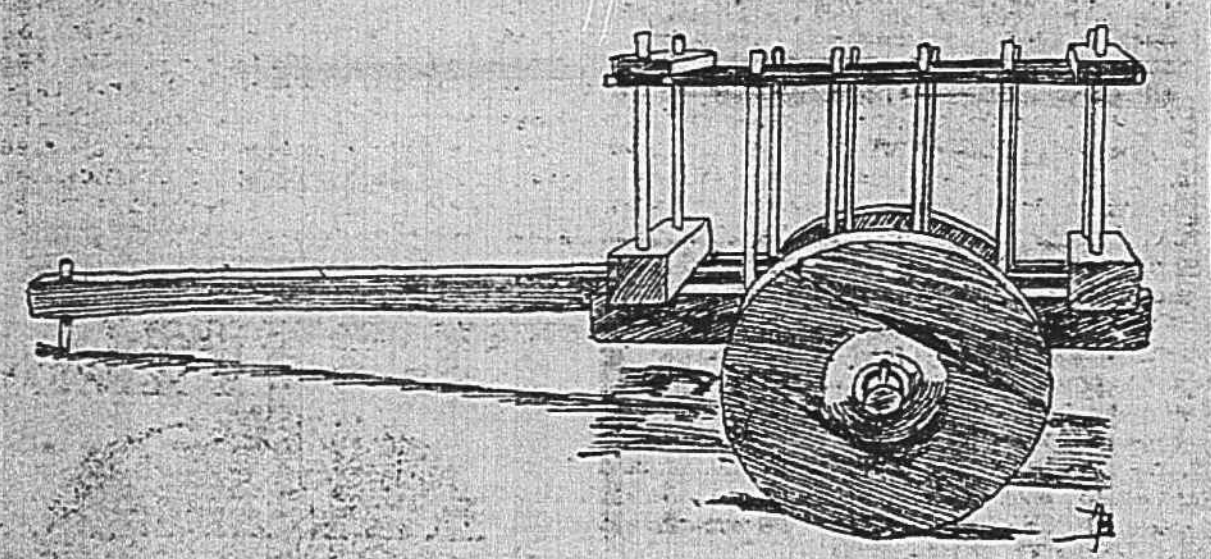
Or he that him designedly sent." Just how the custom came to America is not recorded, but nevertheless it is here, and the spirit of the day is unchanged even if our sense of humor has advanced or deteriorated whichever way one may view the matter. American Jokes. One of the American tricks is to glue a coin to the pavement and have people try to pick it up. This affords the greatest amusement to the street urchins. Another is to drop a pocketbook stuffed with paper on the street and then call out "April Fool!" when a passerby picks it up. A package to which a slender, almost-invisible string is attached is another favorite trick, as is the "kick under the hat."

In the old days the London street gamins delighted in calling out to gentlemen who were walking with ladies—"Say, mister, what is that on your coat?" When the embarrassed man had twisted himself in all manner of ways in trying to find out the boy would call out—"Just the tail to the coat—April fool!" Years afterward the boy calls out—"Say, mister, there's something on your face!" and when the man gets out his handkerchief and begins to rub he is greeted with—"Why, your nose is on your face—April fool!" Sending persons to the druggists for pigeons' milk or to the bookseller's for a history of Eve's grandmother are still a common practice. Loaded signs and canny stuffs with cotton and pepper are regarded as refined April fool tricks and so common that few men will accept a Havana from a friend on that day and many girls distrust the boxes of candy sent to them by over-generous sweethearts. The custom of pinning papers bearing the words "APRIL FOOL" to a man's coat tail is no longer regarded as funny in this country, although it is still regarded as a clever April fool joke in England.

# Before the Automobile

FOUR hundred years ago there was not a wheel of any description on the American continent; no, not even a wheelbarrow. Still more—there was not a draft animal here: that is, one which was used as such. The North American Indians might have domesticated the powerful bison of the plains, but their imagination did not extend that far. It has been very aptly said that, "Necessity is the mother of invention" and it logically follows that when ne-

Spanish were also responsible for the introduction of the horse, and the first wheeled vehicle in the shape of their "Carreta," shown in one of the illustrations, was taken from one exhibit in the National Museum. This cumbersome cart, made entirely of wood, was used extensively by the Indians of Mexico and Arizona where this type of vehicle is still made and used today. A lighter cart, with spoked wheels and shafts, was later made for transporting freight

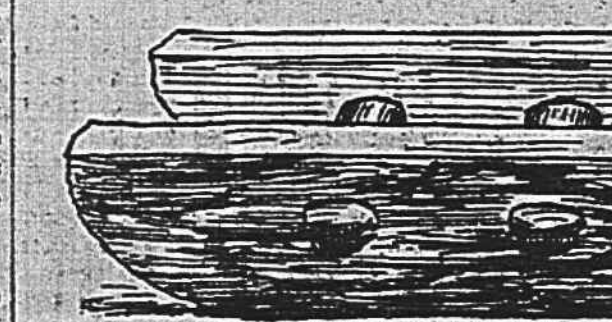


"Spanish Carreta."

er jaw to control their steeds. The plains tribes fixed a contrivance of two crossed poles over the horse, near the neck, the ends of which dragged along the ground. Upon these long poles they bound cross-sticks upon which to place a load. Sometimes a small tent-like cabin was erected upon these dragging poles, and in moving or traveling from place to place, the children of the family rode within, while their mother was honored by a position upon the back of the horse. This get-up was called horse-travols, and the same kind of wheelless vehicle was said to have been adopted for the dogs of the early Pueblos. The Prairie Schooner. The early settlers not only used the two-wheeled carts for transporting their families and their effects from place to place, but later made four-wheeled "prairie schooners," named after the boats which their bodies closely resembled, that more might be carried in one wagon than were possible with the two-wheelers. In these picturesque "prairie-schooners" whole families crossed the great plains of the west to seek their fortune, or living, among wild beasts and savages! Sometimes these wagon trains stretched out for a long distance, and many out-riders on horseback accompanied them for guidance and protection, but their old matchlock rifles could not be reloaded as quickly as the spear or arrow of the Indian could be in readiness, so traveling across the plains was not always free from dangers of redskins. While the most primitive carts, introduced first into Mexico, were very heavy and cumbersome, much lighter ones were later made after the general pattern of the heavy ones. One of these lighter vehicles, which was extensively used in the Colonies, was the one-horse chaise which Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his poem, "The Deacon's Masterpiece," designated as the "One-hoss-shay." This "shay" was the be-

ginning of carriage-making in the United States, and when supplied with good springs, made a comfortable means of conveyance for two persons, with a rack in the rear for all necessary baggage. (The illustration shown was drawn from one of the very early models, exhibited in the National Museum.) This early model, without steel springs, must have been a veritable "rough-ride" in those by-

goned days when roads in this country were in as primitive a condition as wagon manufacturing. Historic Stage Coach. The old historic stage coach made its appearance about the beginning of the nineteenth century, when it was put in general use throughout the United States. Its familiar shape, body was suspended above the frame work of the supporting parts by means of great leather straps, and these added greatly to the ease of the occupants within. To these coaches, four or more horses were harnessed, and the weary trips from—"Philadelphia to Pittsburgh," or between numerous other "points" were undertaken with figures piled up on top and behind the big stage.



Early Settler's Sled.

It goes without saying that traveling was slow and tedious in those early days and no doubt passengers had plenty of time to get well acquainted with one another during their journey. First Steam Carriage. Strange as it may seem, it is re-

corded that the first steam carriage was made by Oliver Evans, of Philadelphia, in 1787, while it seems the first quite practical one was manufactured by the Stanley Steam Carriage Company of Newton, Mass., in 1827.

The first iron-rail track in the United States was laid in 1826 from the quarries at Quincy, Mass.; a track four miles long, costing \$50,000; and was opened on Fourth avenue, New York, way back in 1832, the elevated street railways were not erected there until 1877-78. With the successive improvements in the application of steam, transportation both on land and water greatly increased, and railroad and steamship companies began to develop and handle more business. Considering this wonderful development and wide application of the steam engine, it is strange indeed that the automobile did not arrive until so late a date. It has only been during the past fifteen years, or less, after the development of the gas engine, that the automobile business has taken on such immense proportions.

By 1835 one thousand miles of railroad track had been completed in the United States, but the speed of trains had not passed much above the 4 mile-an-hour limit. The first sleeping car came during the year 1836, but the Pullman Palace Car waited until very nearly a generation had passed (1864). Steam Railways Appear. While the first street horse-railroad

The first electric railway was opened in Berlin, Germany in 1881, but it was some ten years or so before the first electric underground system superseded the cable-propelled method in Washington, D. C. Electric locomotives have been in use for some years for short runs, in various parts of the country, but the development of the "third rail" and trolley systems have far outdistanced the

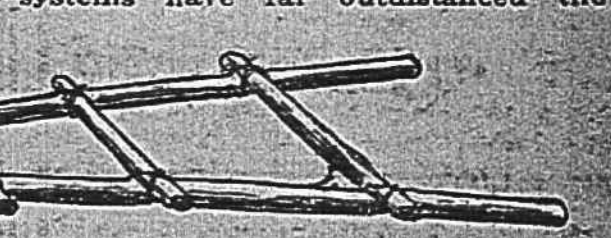


Indian Sled.

more cumbersome locomotives. One of the most pleasing changes from steam to electricity occurred when the New York elevated system gave up their little steam engines for the cleaner cars propelled by the "third rail" electric method. Wheels—Wheels—Wheels. Now our city streets present wheels everywhere! Policemen protect us at street crossings from the dangers of carts, carriages, street cars, wagons, automobiles, bicycles, motor-cycles, etc., etc. Over one million automobiles are at present in use in this country, which means that one is either operated or owned by one person in every hundred of our population. The healthful exercise of walking is more dangerous in our large cities today than it has ever been before in the history of our country. More or less irresponsible chauffeurs are operating great gasoline or steam-driven trucks and cars along our thoroughfares today, some of which are capable of the speed of our modern locomotives, and in having no track to run on become far more of a danger. Nevertheless the automobile is a boon to thousands of business concerns and a luxury to a great number of individuals who do not abuse the privilege of riding in one.

Not the least that the automobile has brought to pass is the relieving of the many thousands of weary horses from their arduous labors in some cases from cruel taskmasters who now have a chance to "say things" at a balky automobile.

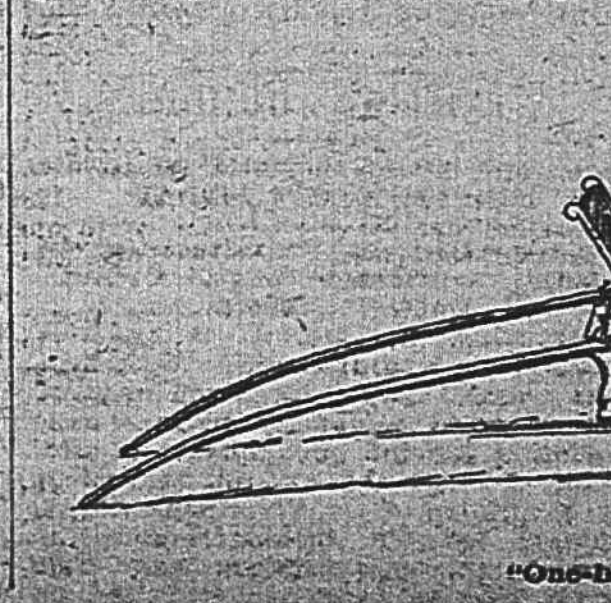
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Steam Railways Apparatus.

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"One-hoss-shay."